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COUNTRY East Germany REPORT

TOPIC Cottbus Airfield 25X1

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REMARKS

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1. In late July 1953, [redacted] Cottbus airfield had been vacated and could be entered freely. On 30 July, [redacted] the field was empty and the hangars were closed. Sheep were grazing on the field. In early August, there was no change in the status of the field. The road along the Spreewald railroad line which previously had been blocked was open to passenger traffic. On 23 August, flying was observed at the field. Thirteen Yak-18s were parked in front of the large hangar. The field itself was not blocked. Only a short [redacted] Between 23 and 27 August, some flying was seen.<sup>1</sup>

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2. In August, [redacted] the Funker Kaserne was occupied by 250 to 300 VPL.<sup>2</sup>

3. The following observations were made at the field between mid-August and 1 September: Mid-August. Some Yak aircraft were observed in front of the hangars. A few soldiers were seen nearby.

24 August. In the morning, 12 aircraft were parked in front of the hangars. Three trucks and 35 men who apparently were undergoing instruction were seen nearby.

26 August. Twelve aircraft were seen in front of the hangars.

27 August. At 5:20 p.m., no aircraft or soldiers were observed at the field.

1 September. Between 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m., eight aircraft were lined-up in front of the hangars, three others at the eastern end of the runway. Two radio trucks, 1 ambulance, 1 fire truck, 1 kitchen truck, 2 trucks and 3 sedans were also seen. The aircraft were painted olive-drab [redacted] One of the planes took off, climbed about 500 meters while flying a circle over the field, landed again on the runway and took off again before rolling to a stop. The plane repeated this practice three times before taxiing back over the sod to the eastern end of the runway. Subsequently another plane took off for the same practices.<sup>1</sup>

4. In August, the shipping of aircraft crates from the airfield continued. On 21 August, about 20 crates were still observed at the installation.<sup>3</sup>

5. On 31 August, [redacted] [redacted] theoretical training was completed, that flight training was to start on 1 September and that fuel had been supplied recently.

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6. In the afternoon on 27 August, fuel was transferred from five railroad tank cars into tank trucks with trailers at the Spreewald railroad station. [redacted]

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7. Between 24 August and 1 September, there was heavy vehicular traffic mainly in the direction of Peitz.

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8. At 6 p.m. on 19 August, no activities were observed at the field. Aircraft were parked in an open hangar. On 20 and 21 August, 8 aircraft were lined-up in front of the hangars. On 21 August, one of the hangars was open and it appeared [redacted] occupied by aircraft. At 9:30 a.m. on 22 August, 12 aircraft were observed in front of the hangars.

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9. After 20 August, there was heavy vehicular traffic at the field. Most of the motor vehicles observed belonged to the VPL.

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10. On 26 August, fuel was drained from four railroad tank cars into several tank trucks with trailers at the Cottbus railroad station. The trucks which were occupied by VPL proceeded in the direction of the airfield.

11. [redacted] allegedly, ground attack aircraft were soon to be stationed at the field. 25X1

12. At noon on 4 September, 28 single-engine low-wing monoplanes were observed in front of the hangars and at the take-off point. 25X1

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[redacted] flying was practiced by both types of planes. 25X1

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1. [redacted] Comment. Previous information which indicated that Cottbus airfield was completely vacated is corrected by the present report inasmuch as it indicates that the Soviets and all aircraft left the field while the VPL units remained there. [redacted] It could be determined that the Soviet training regiment temporarily moved to Wolzow airfield and probably transferred from there to Puetnitz. After a temporary suspension of air activity by VPL, Yak-18s were made available to the VPL in Cottbus for further flight training. Various reports received previously indicated, however, that VP pilots are not trained on jet aircraft.

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2. [redacted] Comment. The Main Department of the Rear Services of the VPL operations staff is housed in the former Funker Kaserne on the eastern edge of Cottbus airfield. The other departments of this operations staff and the 301st Airfield Supply Bn are, allegedly, quartered in the airfield area north of the road to Burg, while the Bereitschaftsstab (division headquarters) and the 601st VP Regt are quartered south of this road.

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3. [redacted] Comment. Aircraft crates have been shipped away from Cottbus airfield since mid-July 1953. According to previous information, most of the crates were empty. However, some of the crates are believed to have contained aircraft because they were guarded. The present location of the 80 to 100 MiG-15s which had been supplied to Cottbus airfield in April 1953 could not be determined. It is believed that about 30 of these MiG-15s were assigned to the former Soviet training regiment. The other MiG-15s were possibly assigned to fighter regiments stationed at various airfields.

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4. [redacted] Comment. Il-10s are reported for the first time at Cottbus airfield. Possibly training on ground attack aircraft is scheduled to replace the previous training with jet fighters. 25X1

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